

INTERVIEW WITH JOTAJOTA

Myth and Opinion

During a beautiful early spring afternoon at the beginning of September, we find ourselves in the French Garden of Independence Park, in Rosario. We are here to speak with Juan Jose Luetich about philosophy, sitting on a park bench, surrounded by meticulously trimmed bushes, close to the fountain head.

—We have received many new comments and questions regarding the subjects covered in the first two issues. It is encouraging to see that so many people are interested in philosophy. I am one of those who believes that a system of ideas that overcomes the current ways of thinking can improve the world.

—I share in that hope, and I am going to invest all of my strength into making this project a reality.

—What is the origin of myths?

—Myths are the products of a time in which accounts were not recorded in writing. The problem then was how to preserve them. And tradition had shown us that writing songs was a good solution for that, since musical rhythm and rimes—both of them, repetitious in nature—, would cause you to remember the words (the lyrics). On the other hand, the subject of a song is better remembered when it is presented in the form of simple ideas joined together in unusual ways. The art of ingeniously stating complex ideas in simple terms is that of the poets. That is why rhythm (and/or rhyme) and poetic language have been joined since then. The problem with poems is not in the rhythm/rhyme—in spite of the artificiality of that recourse—but in the poetic language itself. Because if whoever receives the message that was coded by the poet has no knowledge of the code technique used, he may decode it in his own way and interpret almost anything from it. A good poet tries to avoid this by allowing only the interpretations he wants, but it is clear that this is not always accomplished.

—What do myths and opinions have in common?

—Their multiplicity. Myths have multiple interpretations, those that are wanted and those that are unwanted by the poets. While opinions are, by definition, numerous. And multiplicity—which may come from reproduction, in the case of something that can be reproduced (for example, an article that is mass produced), or by counterfeiting, in

the case of something that is irreplaceable (for example, a work of art)—entails devaluation. Observe that diversity (the existence of many different things) is wealth; however, multiplicity (the repetition of the same) is abundance, not wealth. The concept of abundance is more encompassing. Let us consider two real-life examples: currency, compared to the goods and services for which it can be exchanged, will lose value during an inflationary process; a counterfeit statue, while its falseness remains unknown, will have a certain value, but that value will be lost as soon as it becomes apparent that it is counterfeit, because there could be thousands of counterfeit statues, while the original one is unique.

—Is it then simply a matter of quantity?

—Yes, in principle. But then there is a matter of names. We can give a name to the original sculpture: for example “the largest of Gerbino’s Venuses.” [I say this because I am looking at one of the sculptures in the fountain from here.] But if we were to replicate that sculpture, what name would we give each replica? If I raise a rabbit, I can give it a name. If the rabbit reproduces and I find a thousand, almost identical rabbits in my yard someday, I may be able to recognize him, but I would not be able to name the others. They would be hidden in the crowd. That is why the ancients speak of “what is hidden” in the sense of “that which is unnamable.”

—I have always admired the acuteness of the ancients. The image of something hidden is a good one. I cannot think of one better for the numerous.

—I like to think of that which is hidden as “that which is forgotten”, that is, “that which cannot be kept.” If something is hidden, it cannot be named, therefore, it cannot be kept and is forgotten. This is what happens with false structures. You quickly forget they exist. They return to the chaos of the unnamable things.

—I liked that image very much. Thank you for sharing it.

We walked several meters, to the corner of Balcarce and Pellegrini avenue. We said goodbye and I returned to my studio to make a clean draft of my notes. Juan Jose Luetich, once again, left me in thought. I think the subject of this dialog deserves a space in the next one.

Juan José Luetich, teacher by vocation, by choice, by training, by certification and by exercising the trade, began his career when, while still very young, he received the title of Music Professor (specialty: The Piano), recognized by the Superior Government of the Province of Santa Fe. While taking his specialization courses he taught Music Theory at the “Josefina Prelli” Conservatory. During his time as a university student, he served as a teacher in the “Rosario Study Center and worked as a private tutor. The subject matters he covered were: Language and Mathematics for introductory high school courses; Mathematics, Physics, Cosmography, Chemistry, Merceology, Biology, Language and Literature, for high school and precollege level; Algebra, Analytical Geometry, Calculus, Differential Equations, Numeric Methods, Discrete Mathematics, FORTRAN Programming, Statistics, Probabilities, Mechanics, Calorimetry, Acoustics, Optics, Electricity, Magnetism, Quantum Physics, Astronomy, Electrical Engineering, Digital Circuits, Biological Physics, Statistics, Materials Science, Civil Structures, Industrial Installations, General Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Biological Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Thermodynamics, Physical Chemistry, Chemical Kinetics, Transport Phenomena, Reactor Design and Control Theory, for students in various faculties and for university students seeking careers in engineering, systems, architecture, agricultural sciences, veterinarian sciences, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and biochemistry. During his postgraduate studies he also gave private classes in Partial Derivative Equations, Calculus of Variations, Finite Elements, Fluid Mechanics, Continuum Mechanics, Statistical Physics, Thermal Machines, Quantum Chemistry and Organic Synthesis. After founding the Luventicus Academy, he gave various online courses: Numbers Theory, Geometric Inequalities, Finite Differential Equations, Differential Geometry, Topology, Atomic Models, Solid State Theory, Computational Chemistry, Non-Linear Systems and LISP Programming. In other institutions he currently teach or has taught the following subjects: Physics, Chemistry and Information Technology, in a mid level school (for Administration and Humanities); Research Paper and Presentation Techniques, at a Philosophy school (pre-tertiary level); Algebra and Geometry, Professional Techniques and Chemical Technologies for a higher technical degree in Electronics; Quantitative Techniques (Operational Investigation) and Research Methodology, at a Business Sciences faculty (university level); Unitary Processes (Reactor Analysis), at a Chemistry and Engineering faculty (university level); Air Transport of Contaminants, for a Master in Chemistry (postgraduate level). Juan Jose Luetich also became interested in didactic matters and wrote countless articles that encompass his observations and proposals, among them one regarding the teaching of chemistry to blind students. He has given classes in English for scientific and technical subjects. He is the author of various textbooks and has directed a great many graduate and postgraduate theses. He has also worked in creating and modifying study plans. In that respect, he has been consulted by institutions within the country and abroad.

About this publication

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